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- [Pedestrian Policies and Design Guidelines](#)
- [The Economic Impact of Open Space](#)

## UPCOMING EVENT

[Smart Growth Speaker Series: Smart Growth -- The Massachusetts Experience](#)

May 15, 2006

[More events](#)

## HEADLINES

Daily updates on smart growth issues can be found at [www.smartgrowth.org/news/webnews.asp](http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/webnews.asp)

### CALIFORNIA

#### **Smart Growth Issues Are Hot Topic for California's Democratic Gubernatorial Candidates**

Sharpening their tone as the June 6 Democratic gubernatorial primary nears, state Treasurer Phil Angelides and Controller Steve Westly tried to "out-green and out-criticize" each other during a California League of Conservation Voters environmental debate in West Los Angeles, although observers consider their anti-pollution, clean-energy, and smart-growth commitments almost "indistinguishable," reports Sacramento *Mercury News* writer Kate Folmar, quoting University of Southern California political analyst Sherry Bebitch Jeffe, who said of the debate, "There was not much that separated the two."

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5392&state=5>

### DELAWARE

#### **Sussex County Accepts Three Applications for Moderately Priced Housing Unit Program**

Despite prevalent skepticism about developer willingness to participate in Sussex County's three-tier Moderately Priced Housing Unit (MPHU) Program -- launched in January to help workers making from 80 to 125 percent of the area's median income, or between \$30,850 and \$74,375 -- the County Council received and accepted three first-round program applications, under which developers would build a total of 546 affordable units in exchange for density bonuses in their projects should they successfully complete the entire approval process.

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5393&state=8>

### GEORGIA

#### **Atlanta Developer Finds That Preserving Trees Saves Money While Helping Create Seasoned, Small-Town Feel**

Although many metro Atlanta developers still think preserving trees isn't worth the effort and strip the ground bare before construction, those like Hedgewood Properties principal Pam Sessions know that "saving trees means money," reports *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* writer Maria Saporta from the company's mixed-use Vickery community under way in south Forsyth County, some 25 miles northeast of central Atlanta, crediting smart growth for its seasoned small town feel, enhanced by "huge swaths of mature forests" kept for several parks throughout the 214-acre development.

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5394&state=11>

### MAINE

#### **Town Meetings Provide Local Input on "Blueprint for Action" While Bringing Smart Growth**

### **Message to Northern Maine**

Its traditional resource-based economy in a turbulent shift from manufacturing to service jobs, its taxes among the highest nationwide, and its unique places crucial for tourists and new businesses too often threatened by haphazard development, Maine needs sound planning to avoid decline and achieve long-term sustainability, argued GrowSmart Maine President Alan Caron and Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program Director Bruce Katz during their eight 90-minute town-meeting presentations across northern Maine in three days, gathering local input on Brookings' "Blueprint for Action," expected to be ready by September and to influence both gubernatorial and legislative campaigns.

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5395&state=20>

### **MINNESOTA**

#### **Commuting Cost Database Could Help Home Buyers Find True Cost of Living in Suburbs**

Increasingly troubled by record gas prices, people who bought bigger or cheaper houses in the outer-ring suburbs despite long commutes to Twin Cities' jobs are having second thoughts about choices they made, with a Brookings Institution-commissioned regional study finding large disparities in household transportation costs, including the need for more cars, note Minneapolis-St. Paul *Star Tribune* writers David Peterson and Laurie Blake, reporting that some organizations try to make prospective buyers aware of related commuting costs and that the area "may become ground zero in a national movement to help homeowners understand the true cost of home ownership."

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5396&state=24>

### **MISSISSIPPI**

#### **Municipal Leaders Look at Ways to Rebuild Coastal Communities Safer and Smarter at Biloxi Conference**

Urging municipal leaders at a Comprehensive Resource Management Program in Biloxi to realize that what they build now "will be their legacies for a hundred years," Mississippi Development Authority official Ann Daigle emphasized the benefits of New Urbanism community planning for post-hurricane coastal reconstruction, the arguments echoed by her Department of Marine Resources counterpart Jennifer Buchanan, who pointed out that the terrestrial and aquatic systems of coastal habitats are co-dependent and shouldn't be separated, stressing, "That is why we are having this smart growth conference -- to match the scope of our building with what we need."

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5397&state=25>

### **NEW JERSEY**

#### **Mount Laurel Eminent Domain Case Heads to New Jersey Supreme Court**

In another tricky eminent domain case likely to have national implications, Mount Laurel officials gave MiPro Homes LLC final approval for its 23 single-family homes just south of Mount Laurel State Park in May 2002, but a few weeks later seized the 16-acre parcel for open space, with the lower court ruling for the township, the state Supreme Court just hearing further arguments, and builder attorney Jeffrey Baron convinced that any decision will go to the U.S. Supreme Court.

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5398&state=31>

### **SOUTH DAKOTA**

#### **Smart Growth Leadership Institute Helps Rapid City Prepare Visioning Process for Long-Term Planning**

In a first step to future prosperity and quality of life, communities must define for themselves what good growth is and what it requires, because indifference or confusion over goals and means can spell haphazard development and gradual decline, explained Washington-based Smart Growth Leadership Institute Executive Director Harriet Tregoning and Associate Director of Implementation Benjamin dela Pena during two days of workshops in Rapid City, to help it prepare a visioning process for its long-term future.

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5399&state=42>

### **TENNESSEE**

#### **Memphis Newspaper Declares That Smart Growth Does Pay, Urges Focus on Development in Urban Areas**

"Smart growth does pay," announces a Memphis *Commercial Appeal* editorial headline, with the editors saying if the industry ignored their earlier financial and environmental arguments for development in urban areas, it should now consider a shift by one of its own long-time suburban giants, namely Beazer Homes, which plans to concentrate on Memphis downtown condos and

townhouses in the future.

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5400&state=43>

#### **WASHINGTON**

##### **Seattle's Walking School Bus Program Emphasizes Children's Health, Provides Community-Building Power**

With parents chauffeuring kids to school responsible for perhaps a quarter of Seattle's morning congestion and emission-related air quality and respiratory problems, especially in school idling zones, the pedestrian-advocacy Feet First group will expand its successful 18-month "Walking School Bus" pilot program from cooperation with Bailey Gatzert Elementary in central Seattle to another eight schools in southern neighborhoods, promoting child exercise, pedestrian safety and closer links between schools and, especially, immigrant families.

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5401&state=48>

#### **INTERNATIONAL NOTES**

##### **British Columbia Considers Allowing Solo Hybrid Drivers in HOV Lanes to Reduce Pollution, Oil Consumption**

To reduce its oil consumption and improve air quality, British Columbia is encouraging the use of fuel-efficient low-emission hybrid cars, already exempting them from up to \$2,000 of provincial sales tax, and now considering the pros and cons of letting solo hybrid drivers use High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes.

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5402&state=54>

##### **Vancouver Councilor Eyes Fees to Discourage Developing Parcels in Agricultural Land Reserve**

Since developers who damage fish habitat must pay the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans remediation fees that fund fishery upgrades elsewhere, the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) agriculture committee chairman, Richmond Councilor Harold Steves, wants the district to charge similar hefty fees for taking farms from the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), confident "(i)t would end all the speculation on farmland in British Columbia."

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5403&state=54>

##### **Ontario's Transport Minister Introduces Bill to Create Regional Transportation Authority for Toronto**

As part of the new \$1.2 billion Move Ontario transit, road and bridge investment program established by Ontario Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty under his 2006 budget, Transportation Minister Harinder Takhar introduced legislation to create the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority (GTTA), which will integrate municipal and regional transit planning, coordinate fares and service among nine transit agencies, devise a five-year capital and investment strategy, and align its plans not only with the province's Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Plan, Greenbelt goals, and policy statements, but also with municipal blueprints.

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5404&state=54>

##### **From Rule-Maker to Developer: Ottawa Announces Plans to Design Two Smart Growth Projects Near City Transit Stations**

With Ottawa metro developers still bent on "the same kind of subdivisions that have been plopped on farmers' field for decades" and reluctant to build more densely within the urban growth boundary, the city "will go from rule-maker to developer" and design two projects for tracts near transit stations on its own, writes *Ottawa Citizen* city editorial page editor Ken Gray, quoting deputy city manager for planning Ned Lathrop, who says, "We had to show that smart growth works."

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5405&state=54>

#### **QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

"Building great neighborhoods is profitable. When more developers realize that, we all will be better off."

-- *Hedgewood Properties principal Pam Sessions*

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/article.asp?art=5394&state=11>

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